Frequently Asked Questions About Brand Statements

**What if my background is not related to technology or Data Analytics?**

You can always connect other experiences to a new function!

Employers are looking for candidates who meet their technical skill requirements (you are building these skills in class), and their non-technical skill requirements (that you bring with you from your past professional and educational experiences).

Think about the skills you have developed and the strengths you bring as an employee.

* Do you have experience working on multiple projects at once?
* Have you worked on large projects in a complex environment?
* Are you exceptional at customer service?
* Are you a strong team player?
* Are you highly organized and detail-oriented?

Think about what you have learned so far in the program. What have you enjoyed the most? Is there a technology or language you have a growing passion for? Incorporate those technologies, tools and/or framework into your brand statement.

**What if my work is not related to tech at all right now? (e.g. I am an assistant in a medical practice.)**

Whatever your previous profession, you have a set of skills and talents that you have developed. Those skills and talents, coupled with your data analytical skills, are what make you a compelling candidate to employers. Reflect on what you do best (see the questions above) and emphasize your long-standing interest in, and passion for, technology which has led you to pursue a career transition. Focus on the skills you have developed and your excitement for opportunities going forward.

**What if I took time off work to raise small children?**

This will not impact your brand statement; it can be a challenge for your resume depending upon the size of your professional work history gap. Any consulting work or significant volunteer work during your years of working at home can help “mask” the gap. When it comes to addressing the gap in your resume or during an interview, there is conflicting advice. Some research concludes that candidates who are transparent and explain the gap in their resume are more likely to he hired. Other human resource experts advise that it is dependent upon the hiring manager.

Your brand statement does not need to include references to time. Your brand statement can be more compelling when it includes references to past accomplishments and how those, when coupled with your new tech skills, make you an ideal candidate.

**What if there are gaps in my work history?**

As we stated above, this should not impact your brand statement. This may be more of a challenge in your resume and in interviews. Your Career Director will be a great resource to help you think through this challenge.

**What if I have 15 years of experience in one industry outside of technology?**

You are bringing a wealth of knowledge, skills and experience into your new career. It is critical that you spend time identifying your key accomplishments and your areas of expertise because it is your well-earned knowledge and expertise that will help you stand-out among applicants. Include the accomplishments and skills that are most transferable into your desired career in your brand statement.

**What do I do if I don’t have a college degree?**

Unless a person has an undergraduate degree or an advanced degree in an area relevant to his or her desired career, most people do not include their education in their brand statement. Focus on the skills you have developed through the program, and the skills you have mastered in any previous employment. Convey confidence in your abilities and share your passion for learning.

**Do I talk about my family or ethnicity in my brand statement?**

Focus on your skills, accomplishments, and who you are as a professional. If you are fluent in any languages other than English, these are great to include in your brand statement.

**Do I mention hobbies and interests?**

The best hobbies and interests to include in your brand statement are those that are relevant to the industry in which you want to work. For example, if you want to work in the travel industry, including that you have traveled extensively would be appropriate in your brand statement. But specificity matters. I love to travel is not a helpful statement to make. I have traveled to over 40 countries and I am fluent in Spanish is a much stronger statement. It is specific and includes both an accomplishment and a skill. Your hobbies and interests should never be the highlight of your brand statement.

**Which is better— to try and capture the reader’s attention with humor and/or creativity OR to be more professional and straightforward?**

It is important to come across as professional and straightforward. Let your accomplishments, skills, and prior experience be what stands out.